



BCC 2009-047
March 4, 2009

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BUSINESS & LABOR

EXHIBIT NO. 5
DATE # 3-6-09
BILL NO. HB 114

The Honorable Joe Balyeat, Chair
Business, Labor and Economic Affairs Committee
Montana State Senate
Helena, MT 59620

RE: Support HB 114 "Clarify licensure and liability in public health emergencies"


Dear Senator Balyeat:

Representative Henry's bill would allow licensed out-of-state volunteer professionals to assist Montana during a governor-declared emergency. Montana is one of eight states that does not have such a provision for licensed health care workers. Missoula County is home to two excellent regional medical centers; yet our emergency preparedness work with these institutions has made us acutely aware that the capacity to meet a rapid or extended demand for hospital services is narrow. HB 114 addresses this gap.

HB 114 also provides for other licensed volunteers to assist in the event of other emergency scenarios. For example, an earthquake or flood might result in a temporary need for more qualified engineers to assist.

Finally, the bill provides clear and strict provisions for assuring licensure, sanctions, and other means of overseeing the quality of work of these licensed volunteers. We urge your support of HB 114.

Sincerely,
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS


Bill Carey, Chair


Jean Curtiss, Commissioner


Michele Landquist, Commissioner

BCC/ppr
cc: Ellen Leahy, Health Department
Bob Reid, Emergency Services